POLICY

Update to Travel Policy for Federally-Funded Sponsored Projects and Programs

We have updated the Travel Policy with regard to foreign travel for federally-funded sponsored projects and programs. Travelers may now take advantage of Open Skies Agreements, which provide limited exception to the Fly America Act.

The Fly America Act requires travelers using federally sponsored funds for foreign travel to use a U.S. flag air carrier – regardless of cost or convenience. The Open Skies Agreements exception provides flexibility by allowing qualified travelers to use airlines from the European Union, Australia, Switzerland, and Japan under certain circumstances. To qualify for reimbursement under a federally-funded sponsored project or program, this exception must be selected in the Fly America Waiver Checklist and all of the following criteria must be met:

- Travel is not being reimbursed using Department of State (including all of the Department of Defense) funding.
- Travel is booked by an approved University Travel Agency.
- Travel voucher includes University Travel Agency’s certification of compliance with the Open Skies Agreements.
- Travel voucher includes a completed Fly America Waiver Checklist.

Please contact Francine Taylor at ftaylor@princeton.edu or 258-9056, or Johnnie Jones at jjjones@princeton.edu or 258-5770, if you have any questions regarding this regulation.

Procedure Updates Posted

These updated procedures are now posted in the Policy Library:

- Effort Certification Procedure is a new procedure. Please see section V of the Effort Certification in Sponsored Projects Policy.
- Transferring Capital Equipment from Princeton is an updated procedure. Please see section V of the Capital Equipment Policy.

POINTS OF INFORMATION

Budget Training

As part of our initiative to provide financial training opportunities to campus, two budget training sessions are now available. Attendees of the pilot sessions gave the classes excellent reviews.

“Budgeting Fundamentals (Part 1 of 2)” – This session will help you to understand the importance and benefits of budgeting. It will review the steps needed in order to plan a budget effectively in a University setting, walk through a budgeting exercise where you will create a budget for an event, and provide you with some budgeting best practices.

“Budgeting at Princeton (Part 2 of 2)” – This session builds on the skills introduced in Budgeting Fundamentals. More specifically, it will broadly define Princeton’s funding sources and how those resources are then allocated to the individual departments. It will review the steps of budgeting and incorporate the tools available here at Princeton to assist you with the process. “Budgeting Fundamentals” is a prerequisite for this session.

To register or to view the calendar for upcoming April and May
Professional Development: CPA and CIA Network

Finance and Treasury serves as a hub for professional development opportunities for certified public accountants (CPAs) and certified internal auditors (CIAs) on campus. The CPA and CIA Group focuses on networking and training opportunities for CPAs and CIAs who need the required annual Continuing Professional Education (CPE) credits. The networking group is open to CPAs and CIAs throughout the University, including those sitting for the exams. There is a SharePoint site that contains useful information: a calendar of CPE opportunities and links to accounting research resources. If you are interested in obtaining access to this SharePoint site, please contact Brandon Gaines at bgaines@princeton.edu or 258-2527.

Training on FY2012 NIH Salary Cap Reduction

The National Institutes of Health (NIH) recently mandated a reduction in the salary cap from Executive Level I ($199,700) to Executive Level II ($179,700). This table provides

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a summary of updates. All new NIH proposals should use the new Executive Level II ($179,700) cap. Training sessions will be offered on March 23 and April 6. The sessions will focus on application of the new salary cap, and a new cap calculation feature in the Labor Accounting system. Enroll for the session via the Employee Learning Center. For questions about the NIH salary cap, please contact Matt Kotsovolos at mkotsovo@princeton.edu or 258-9551. Questions concerning the Labor Accounting system may be directed to Craig Richmond, at crichmnd@princeton.edu or 258-3295.

Chart of Accounts Update
Following an extensive testing period, the draft design of the new chart of accounts structure is now complete. We will be meeting with financial managers across the University over the coming months to review the proposed structure. You can learn more about the new design today by visiting the project website.

One feature of the draft design is greater specificity in the account code structure. Additional account codes will more effectively track income and expenses. For example, there is currently a single account code for Materials and Supplies (220). This makes it difficult to track expenses separately for office, lab, and printing and mailing supplies. The new chart of accounts design will allow us to make these distinctions.

Please contact Mark Dingfield at mdingfie@princeton.edu or 258-3873 with questions or comments.

Home Ownership Program Review
The University recently performed a careful and comprehensive review of its home ownership programs, which were created more than fifty years ago to assist with the recruitment and retention of world-class faculty. The review focused on ensuring that the programs continue to meet their primary objective, namely the recruitment and retention of faculty. It was prompted by the convergence of numerous internal and external factors including the challenging economic climate, escalation in the scope and cost of the programs, and changing rules and regulations in the wake of the 2008 mortgage crisis.

Based on this review, a series of revisions to the programs will go into effect on July 1, 2012. Details will be available May 1 on the University Mortgage Services website and the Housing and Real Estate Services website. Information about the revisions also will appear in upcoming issues of this newsletter, the Human Resources Communiqué, and the Princeton University Bulletin.

Financial Managers Portal
In the January issue of this newsletter, we announced the launch of the Financial Managers Portal in the Information Warehouse, which provides quick access to the most commonly used financial reports. We are pleased that 174 individuals are using the portal. Please click here for detailed information about the portal features and its use.

Glossary

**chart string**
The chart string represents how you code a financial transaction. It is composed of values for key chartfields, including account, fund, and department.

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**Key F.A.C.T.S. of Our New Chart of Accounts**

**FLEXIBILITY:** An ‘unpacked’ chart string allows for multiple reporting views of your financial information without having to recode data in a shadow system.

**ACCOUNTABILITY:** Clearer definitions of funding sources, organizational units, and expense categories enhance departmental financial management, stewardship, and compliance.

**CONSISTENCY:** Common chart string values used across departments and funding sources ensure better comparability and accuracy in financial reporting and analysis.

**TRANSPARENCY:** The chart string will improve reporting for important activities that currently are not readily visible, including balances controlled by a faculty member, fellowship expense across a department’s sources of funding, and balances by type of funding.

**SIMPPLICITY:** Using the new chart string will reduce the need to transfer money and minimize duplicative coding.